

## [Negro Pioneer]

Burks/BC [??] [??] [NE?] [?]

### NEGRO PIONEER

The oldest employee in any governmental department at the Nebraska State Capitol at Lincoln, is Harry H. Bradley, colored custodian of the State Senate Chamber, now the Unicameral body. For thirty-eight years he has assisted in the sessions of legislature, never missing a session.

Harry first [saw?] service during the administration of Governor Charles H. Dietrich. It was during Governor Dietrich's administration that he witnessed the election of two United States Senators by the legislatures in joint session, as the culmination of a dead-lock which lasted more than ten weeks.

He was the first colored child born at [Seward?] Nebraska, a small town about twenty-five miles from the State Capitol at Lincoln. His father and mother were both former slaves coming to the state about seventy years ago. The history of his mother is both unique and interesting, inasmuch as she was a maid in the household of President Buchanan at Washington D. C. before coming to Nebr. Harry often relates the story his mother so often told him of her early youth on the [plantation?] in Virginia during slavery[:?] Particularly of the time when she was [separated?] in her childhood from her only brother, and how half a century later they were united in Nebr. The circumstances surrounding her coming to Nebraska also [are?] worthy of mention because it was of the fact that Phineas Hitchcock being appointed the first territorial Senator from [Nebr?] that accounted for her have coming to this state. Phineas Hitchcock at the time of his appointment had an only child Gilbert, who later like his father also became a United States Senator from Nebraska. It was in complying with the wishes of Harry's mother, that she was recommended to

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Senator Phineas 2 Hitchcock as nurse-maid for his son Gilbert when the Senator was preparing to return to his home in Omaha, Nebraska. She was recommended to the Senator by Miss Elisha Lane, niece of President was a bachelor. [??]

She was retained as maid in the Senator's home at Omaha for a number of years, and then she met William Bradley and they were married. At first they homesteaded at [Bellview?] Nebr., and it was here their eldest children were born. When they moved to Seward to farm, Harry became the first colored child to be born in that community. There were five children in the Bradley family, an older brother John who still farms at Seward, an Harry, who still farms at Seward, who this narrative is more or less about, are the only ones now living.

Harry recounts that when [he?] was quite young his mother had occasion to go to Ulysses Nebr for a few days. [This?] their she was told there was in the community a crippled colored man who had been there many years called Major Brown. She looked him up and they discovered as they compared notes he was the baby brother whom she had been separated from a half-century ago on that Virginia plantation.

Her brother told her he had come west with the soldiers before the Civil War, and participated in the Indian Wars as an orderly.

He became ill while his company was in Nebraska and they had left him on the plains to die. Here he was found by a family named Reed from the community where Ulysses now stands, who cared for him until his health had returned. He remained with this family for many years, and during this time took up a homestead in Butler County, later selling his preemption. Major Brown became the first mail carrier at Seward, also the first colored mail carrier in Nebraska. For forty-five years he was resident of that community; he died at 3 the age of one hundred years.

Harry Bradley in now sixty-three years old, and during his eventful carreer has had a wide experience as a traveler. He has visited London, Glasgow, Liverpool and Paris at the

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World's Expositions. He has held many places of trust at the great Expositions, at Chicago, Buffalo, Omaha, and St. Louis, Was chief steward at the Nebraska Sod House at Buffalo. He had charge of the roller-chair storage house of the Clarkson Concession company. He was special guard to Susan B. Anthony, the famous suffrage leader, now dead.

"She predicted that I would live to see women in the Nebraska Legislature, and I have," Bradley said in recalling this part of his career.

Harry has had the distinction of putting out two fires in the old Capitol building, and also extinguishing the first blaze which occurred in the new one. One of his jobs in the former building was to remove tubs around from place to place to catch water that came through a leaky roof, and keep it from spoiling books in the library.

Harry has earned the respect and stands high in the estimation of all who knew him. He is excellent citizen of his state, and credit to his race. He has made himself so useful that many solons have come to regard him as an indispensable adjunct of the business of law making.